



The official organ of the United Kingdom Maritime Pilots' Association

## Editorial

For this month's feature I have chosen the MAIB report into a collision, grounding and sinking on the Elbe at the entrance to Brunsbüttel locks which subsequently resulted in a further collision with the wreck of the earlier incident. With all this happening within site of the relevant VTS tower it serves to highlight the risks involved in what are "routine" operations in ports. Whilst the P&I Clubs are becoming increasingly vociferous over claims resulting from what they term as "pilot error", the very nature of our job means that we handle ships in an environment for which they were never really designed with a Master and bridge team (if such a thing actually exists) who are usually totally unfamiliar with the district being navigated. It is in these conditions that the pilot, having the conduct of the vessel, is basically operating alone and thus has the awesome responsibility for assessing and constantly reassessing the risks as elements such as other vessels manoeuvring, a cut in the predicted tide or a deterioration of the weather combine to place the vessel at the limit of its operating parameters. In such circumstances one relatively minor element can easily result in a reportable incident as was the case on the Elbe. The initial incident off Brunsbüttel resulted from a collision between a vessel excluded from pilotage requirements and a vessel under conduct of a PEC holder which has raised relevant comment about watchkeeper manning and overload in the report. The piloted vessel collided with the wreckage of the original incident as a result of an undeclared defect on the vessel which raises other relevant points. From the P&I viewpoint although only one vessel was under the conduct of an authorised pilot it is probable that because the incident occurred within port limits the P&I Clubs involved will statistically classify the claims for all three vessels as "pilot error". This Elbe report is also topical in that neither the Elbe VTS authority nor the Master of the *Maritime Lady* agreed to participate in the investigation.

John Clandillon-Baker FNI  
Email: john@pilotmag.co.uk

## MAIB Report: *Collision on the Elbe off Brunsbüttel Lock*

Last December the MAIB released a report into a collision, subsequent sinking followed by another collision of the entrance to the Kiel Kanal off Brunsbüttel, all under the Elbe VTS control tower. In my opinion this particular MAIB report is of interest to pilots in that I believe that it is the first report to examine the roles of a vessel excluded from pilotage, a vessel with a PEC holder, VTS and subsequently a piloted vessel. As mentioned in my editorial neither the Master of the British vessel involved nor the VTS authority participated in the enquiry and the report has some interesting comments on that policy.



MV Arctic Ocean – Routine Departure?

## SYNOPSIS

At 1955 on 5 December 2005, the UK registered 6,326gt container feeder vessel, *Arctic Ocean*, was leaving Brunsbüttel Lock to turn east across the westbound fairway of the Elbe River to head for Hamburg. At the same time, the Gibraltar registered 1,857gt general cargo vessel *Maritime Lady* was in the westbound fairway heading for the North Sea. The two vessels collided at 1957, with the result that *Maritime Lady* capsized. The master of *Arctic Ocean* held a Pilotage Exemption certificate and *Maritime Lady* was below the size where regulation required a pilot to be carried. The MAIB

report states that "Both masters were attempting to carry out the duties of pilot and watchkeeping officer. This caused them both to be overloaded at a critical stage of their vessel's passage, leading to misjudgements".

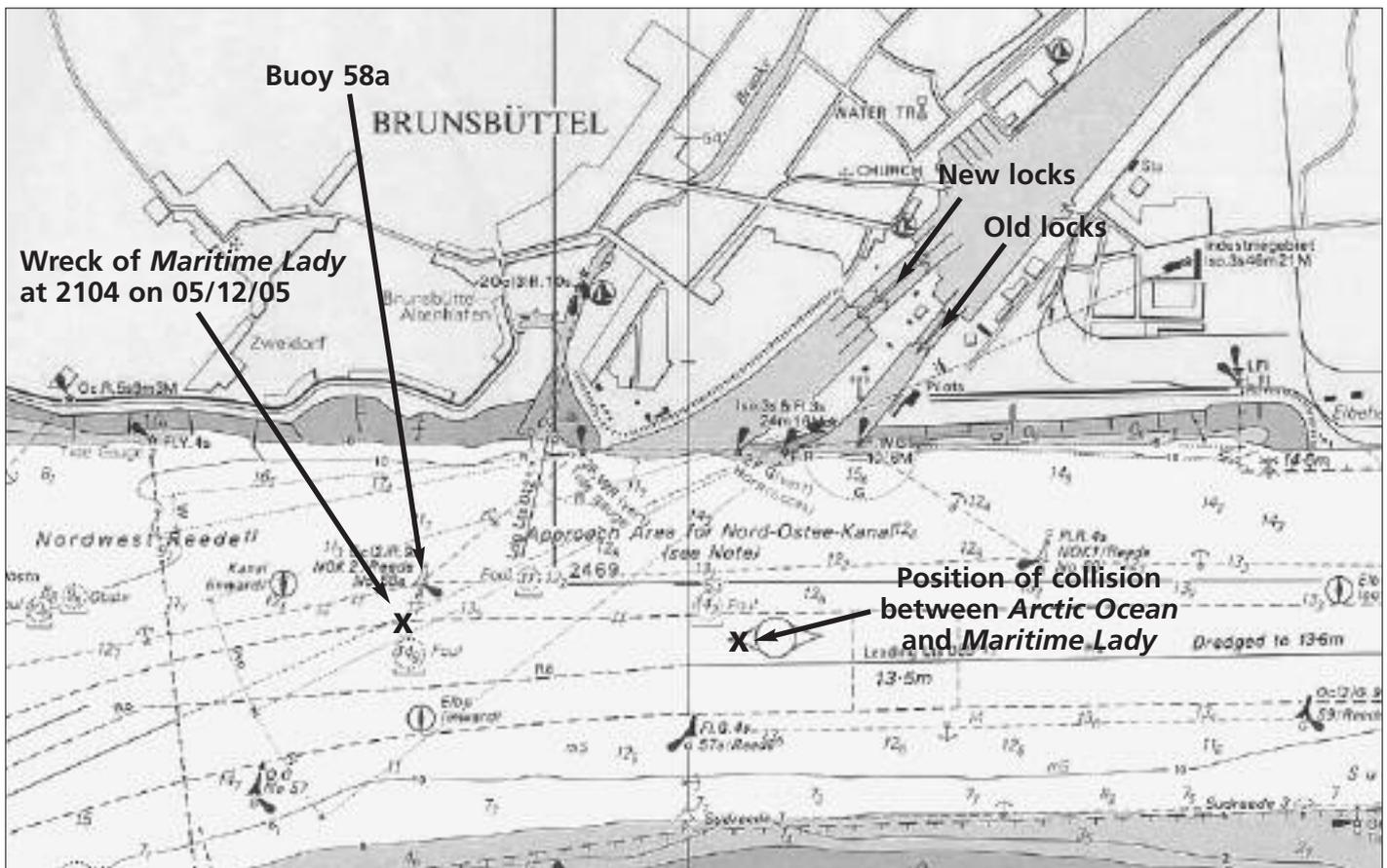
The capsized wreck of *Maritime Lady* drifted until it came to rest in a position 0.75miles south-west of the exit basin of Brunsbüttel Locks.

After the collision, Brunsbüttel Locks were closed until 2100. The first vessel to then leave the locks was the 11,598gt chemical tanker, *Sunny Blossom*. She had a pilot on board and was to head west, to the North Sea, after leaving the lock's exit basin.

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After leaving the lock basin, *Sunny Blossom* was attempting to make the turn to the west, when her stern struck the wreck of *Maritime Lady*, causing serious propeller damage and a total loss of propulsion. She then continued south across the Elbe River, until she grounded on the south bank. There was only slight damage to her hull and no pollution. *Sunny Blossom's* ability to make the westerly turn and clear the wreck of *Maritime Lady* was hampered by a strong ebb tide, the effects of shallow water, some cropping of her propeller and an effective rudder area being at the lower end of acceptable limits.

As a result of this incident the Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Affairs has therefore been recommended to review requirements for bridge manning levels on vessels in its pilotage waters, emergency procedures, procedures covering the briefing of vessels leaving Brunsbüttel Locks and the prioritisation of VTS operators' tasks.

## SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

At 1941 the *Arctic Ocean* made a routine call to Brunsbüttel Elbe Traffic VTS (BETVTS) providing vessel details and advising them that upon leaving the lock he would be proceeding inwards to Hamburg. It would appear from the narrative that no traffic information was provided to the Master and that no further communication with VTS was held with

BETVTS until after the collision!

At about 1950, having let go, the Master who was alone on the bridge, set the engine to half ahead and proceeded out of the lock and commenced swinging to port into the river to cross the Westbound fairway to proceed to Hamburg (see chart). His speed on clearing the lock was estimated at 8-10 kts. It was at this stage that the master saw the green navigation light and masthead light of an outward bound vessel which he identified as *Maritime Lady* from the AIS, and he judged her range as 1.5 miles. This subsequently turned out to be erroneous with the actual range being half that distance at 7.5 cables. Crossing the Westbound lane the Master of the *Arctic Ocean* noticed that *Maritime Lady* was still showing a green sidelight. A subsequent VHF exchange between the two vessels confirmed red to red passing but shortly afterwards the *Maritime Lady* called again on VHF stating that he had steering problems and requested a green to green passing. Both vessels then attempted to take emergency action but the *Arctic Ocean* collided with the starboard side of *Maritime Lady*.

Due to the fact that the Master of the *Maritime Lady* didn't cooperate with the enquiry the MAIB were unable to obtain an account of his actions. However, examination of the vessel revealed no problems with the rudder or steering gear and it was therefore assumed that the reported steering problems resulted from

the Master's unfamiliarity with using a Becker rudder rather than a mechanical defect. One very relevant point made by the investigators regarding the *Maritime Lady* is the following important observation on the practice of two man watchkeeping:

*Another reason the master was alone on the bridge was that Maritime Lady, was not required to take a pilot for the river passage. Had a pilot been required, then it is reasonable to suppose that the pilot would have had either the master or the chief officer on the bridge with him. Thus, two qualified navigators would have been on the bridge, offering assurance that neither was overloaded.*

*The master of any vessel, carrying only a master and one other deck officer, is likely to be faced with a dilemma in pilotage waters where his vessel is not required to take a pilot. Either the vessel is navigated, often in busy and restricted waters, by just one officer or both officers are on the bridge for the passage and they risk exceeding the allowable hours of work. Neither is desirable.*

BETVTS, having observed the collision, sent out a MAYDAY alert and requested that tugs proceed to the area. The *Arctic Ocean* broke clear of the *Maritime Lady* and BETVTS directed her to anchor. An inspection revealed minimal damage.

On board the *Maritime Lady* the situation rapidly became serious as a starboard list developed as soon as the

*Arctic Lady* drifted clear. Fortunately, all the crew members had lifejackets and launched two liferafts, one of which failed to inflate. The Master contacted BETVTS and requested a location to berth or ground the vessel but the list increased so much that it was decided to abandon the ship. By this time there were two pilot cutters on the scene and all the crew were rescued. The now capsized hull drifted West on the ebb tide to ground just west of the entrance of the lock entrance just South of buoy 58a. The BETVTS closed the river to navigation whilst the situation was assessed and subsequently took the decision to reopen the river to navigation at around 2100. The MAIB report criticises this decision on two grounds. Firstly after only one hour the stability of the grounded wreck could not be realistically assessed and secondly because no risk assessment was undertaken for vessels leaving the lock on the ebb tide despite a history of several vessels having collided with the Buoy 58a close to the North of the wreck!

#### **Sunny Blossom**

*Sunny Blossom* was a 20,000 dwt products tanker 161m long with a draft of 9.3m bound from Klaipeda to the USA. She had secured in the lock shortly after the collision in the river and her river pilot boarded at around 2040. During the exchange, the pilot sighted the pilot card and at the same time explained the situation regarding the collision and that when they departed the lock that there would be a strong ebb tide setting to the West but with no other shipping movements expected it was agreed that upon leaving the lock that they would alter course to port to clear the wreck to the South. As soon as the river was opened the *Sunny Blossom* started to leave the lock, clearing the entrance at a speed of about 4.5 kts at 2110. At this point, in anticipation of the tidal effects the pilot ordered the wheel to be put hard to port and the engine order of full ahead was given. *Sunny Blossom* gained speed but failed to clear the wreck and having damaged her propeller went aground on the south side of the river. She was refloated early the next morning and towed to Elbe Harbour at Brunsbüttel.

During the subsequent dry dock inspection it was noticed that two of the propeller blades had previously been cropped of around 60cm of the tips.

The investigation also discovered that the *Sunny Blossom* had been involved in two previous groundings and investigations into those had revealed that her rudder was at the lower end of acceptable performance, a restricting factor which would be enhanced with small under keel clearances. The Master

did not advise the pilot of either the recognised poor steering characteristic or the cropped propeller blades. The MAIB report has determined that if the propeller blades had been complete then the pilot's orders would have resulted in the vessel clearing the wreck.

#### **VTS**

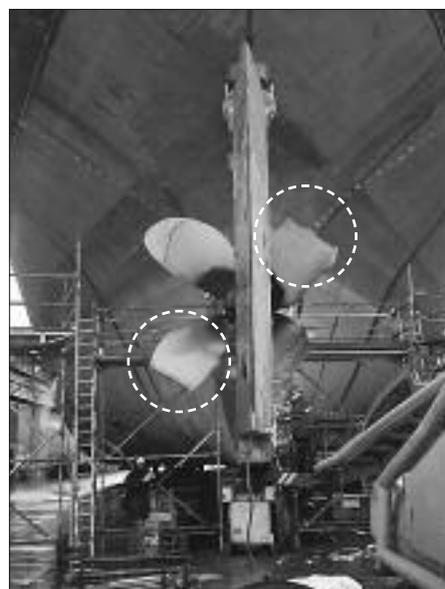
Since the VTS authority refused to cooperate with the MAIB enquiry its role in the incident cannot be analysed. However in common with the majority of port VTS systems its function appears to be mainly as an information service but with a duty pilot on watch at all times to offer navigational assistance if required by any vessels.

On the evening in question it would appear that the Master of the *Arctic Ocean* failed to comply with the reporting procedure to notify BETVTS that she was actually departing from the lock. However, since BETVTS failed to advise the Master of the presence of the *Maritime Lady* proceeding down river at the time of his pre departure report the Master assumed that there was no traffic likely to affect his departure. Although not included in the official procedures for departure the enquiry revealed the existence of a letter issued following a similar collision recommending that VTS provided vessels intending to depart from the lock with relevant traffic movements. Although the VTS refused to cooperate with the MAIB enquiry an internal enquiry, which has not been made public, apparently cleared the VTS operators of any blame and confirmed that correct VTS procedures had been followed.

## **KEY FINDINGS**

#### **Arctic Ocean**

The Master of the *Arctic Ocean*'s made a significant misjudgement in underest-



imating the distance from the *Maritime Lady* and since he had no assistance on the bridge the report concluded that the workload was unreasonable and significantly contributed to him misjudging the range of *Maritime Lady* and since the Mate could have been available considered that he had not properly managed watchkeeper resources.

#### **Maritime Lady**

By the stage *Maritime Lady* was approaching Brunsbüttel, her master's tiredness might have been sufficient to have resulted in poor judgment and decision making.

Waterway regulations gave *Maritime Lady* right of way, as she was the vessel in the fairway.

*Maritime Lady*'s master, with only one other navigating officer on board, did not have the resources to operate with a second navigator on the bridge.

#### **Sunny Blossom**

*Sunny Blossom*'s master did not consider the propeller's state to be significant and, could not have given the pilot any information on the effect on the vessel's performance due to the cropped blades.

*Sunny Blossom*'s sluggish response to her rudder was due to several factors, including: insufficient rudder area and reduced flow over the rudder caused by cropped propeller blades.

#### **VHF**

There were fundamental VHF procedural errors made by the masters of *Arctic Ocean* and *Maritime Lady* that had the potential to cause confusion.

#### **VTS**

*Arctic Ocean*'s master wasn't provided with a traffic report when he reported in and he therefore assumed that the river was clear. VTS should have informed him of traffic at the time of the initial report.

At the time Brunsbüttel Locks were reopened to traffic, there was no certainty that the wreck of *Maritime Lady* was not going to move again.

The level of risk to traffic from the wreck of *Maritime Lady* was not recognised or assessed against predetermined criteria procedures before Brunsbüttel Locks were reopened to traffic. The hazard posed by contact with the wreck was significantly greater than of hitting buoy 58a. It appears, however, that this increased level of risk was not fully recognised or assessed before the locks were re-opened to traffic.

The full report is available on the new all singing, all dancing (see page 14), pilotmag website: [www.pilotmag.co.uk](http://www.pilotmag.co.uk) or from the MAIB website: [www.maib.dft.gov.uk/publications/investigation\\_reports/2007.cfm](http://www.maib.dft.gov.uk/publications/investigation_reports/2007.cfm)

# CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

*I am going to keep this report short as I have already taken up a half page with another reminder about the incident reporting procedure.*

The last quarter has seen section committee members attending meetings with DfT, MCA, DEFRA, IALA, Harbour Masters, the Transport Select Committee, the Shipping Minister – to name but a few. On several occasions we have also been assisted by pilots from outside the committee, and my thanks go to them.

There has also been movement with the Boarding & Landing Code for pilots. This has finally been agreed by UKMPA, BPA and UKMPG. Not bad considering that it was first started by Peter Russell back in 1991. Peter has kindly written the foreword. All pilots should give thanks to the enormous amount of time and effort given by the various people that have been involved. The Code will be officially launched at the PMSC SG meeting on 28 June.

Some of you may be aware that the MAIB Report on the *Skagern / Samskip Courier* collision on the Humber last year has now been published, and is available on their web site. It's a bit late now, but I guess we could say "we told you so".

Included in this edition is a letter from Avald Wymark. I hope, as presumably Avald does, that the letter will inspire some responses. Many of the issues have been discussed at section committee, and, in view of the wide circulation of *The Pilot*, there are some issues that I do not wish to comment on openly. Perhaps this could be an agenda item for the IDM in September, so please, do let us have your thoughts before then.

An early indication of attendance at the IDM would be appreciated – circular 03/07 refers.

*Joe Wilson, Chairman*

## T&G / AMICUS

The result of the ballot for the merger between the T&G and AMICUS Unions was as follows:

No. of papers distributed	729,551
Returned	200,873 (27%)
Invalid	427
Counted	200,448

Approve amalgamation	
Yes	173,258
No	27,188

## Incident Reporting

***If you are involved in an incident, then, in order to protect your insurance cover, please use the following procedure:-***

### MINOR INCIDENT

Complete incident report and forward to Ken Pound at Meridian Insurance  
During normal office hours you can also contact Ken Pound, although this is not necessary

### MAJOR INCIDENT (pollution, bodily harm, etc)

Complete incident report and forward to Ken Pound at Meridian Insurance  
During normal office hours ring Ken Pound at Meridian Insurance:  
**0207 648 5177**

Outside office hours ring a member of section committee (primarily Chairman or Vice Chairman). They will contact insurers and / or a legal representative if thought necessary.

In any case, if you are placed under criminal caution, say nothing until you have taken legal advice. If you are asked to provide a breath sample by a proper officer, it is an offence to refuse.

**All telephone numbers on UKMPA web site, and in *The Pilot* magazine.**

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**Warsash Maritime Centre**  
Newtown Road, Warsash,  
Southampton, SO31 9ZL  
Tel: +44 (0)1489 556215  
Fax: +44 (0)1489 573988

# PENSION NEWS

## The Secretariat

Well, both Richard Wiscombe and I are still located at Buckhurst House in Sevenoaks. The lease comes up for renewal later this year and I am very pleased to say that the Trustees have agreed that we can stay, as I really do not think either Richard or I could take the upheaval involved in moving the office. Just the thought of dragging all the old files out of the attic is enough to make one shudder.

## Benefit Statements

Members should have, by now, received their annual benefit statement for 2006. These statements are based on the member's highest (usually latest) Final Pensionable Earnings with service projected to normal retirement age.

## P60s

P60s in respect of our pensioners and widows will be sent out at the end of April. Pilots who retired on or after 6 April 2006 will be sent additional information in respect of the Lifetime Allowance.

## Change of Address

All members are requested to advise the Secretariat, in writing, of a change in their address. For deferred members this is particularly important as recent research from Aon Limited indicates that a third of workers risk losing the pension they are entitled to and falling victim to ID fraud if they do not inform their pension provider of their new address.

## PNPF Rules and Explanatory Brochures

Changes in the PNPF Rules arising from tax simplification and the 2004 valuation have now been finalised, agreed and adopted by the Trustees. These changes have resulted in a major revision of the PNPF Rules which have now been sent to the printers. Therefore, I hope, members can expect to receive their reprinted copy of the Rules and Explanatory Brochure in the not too distant future.

## Investment Strategy

In November 2006 the Trustees received a presentation from EIM, a "bespoke"

hedge fund of funds provider with a view to implementing the third phase of their investment strategy. The first tranche of funds was disinvested from Schroders and transferred to EIM on 1 April 2007. This will be followed by a further two tranches on 1 May and 1 June respectively.

## Budget March 2007

In March 2007 the Chancellor delivered his 11th (and final) budget. The general points of interest are:

### Financial Assistance Scheme (FAS)

The Chancellor announced that the present Financial Assistance Scheme budget of £2bn would be increased to £8bn in order that the 125,000 people who had lost much of their benefits through membership of underfunded schemes sponsored by insolvent employers would now receive help. The cap on assistance will be increased to £26,000

*(I suppose this is not surprising considering the recent High Court ruling stating the government's rejection of the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman report was unlawful)*

### Lifetime Allowance

The Lifetime Allowance (LTA) rises to £1.6m while the 2007/08 annual allowance is set at £225,000.

### Tax Allowances

#### Single Person

Aged under 65	£5,225
Aged 65-74	£7,550
Aged 75+	£7,690

#### Married Couple's Allowance

Aged under 75	£6,285
Aged 75 and over	£6,365
Age income limit	£20,900

#### Blind Person Allowance

£1,730

#### Income Tax Bands

Starting rate	10%	0 - £2230
Basic rate	22%	£2231 - £34,600
Higher rate	40%	Over £34,600

## Review of Pensions Regulations

Two external reviewers have been appointed by the Government to carry out a deregulatory review of pensions regulations. In their consultation paper they state the aim of the review is to foster an environment where employees are adequately protected, but where trustees and employers can plan long-term with some confidence regarding the costs of the pensions promise without being stifled by excessive regulation in the design and administration of the provision. They are committed to preserving those rights that

have already accrued.

The terms of reference for the review are 'to examine regulation with the aim of simplifying and reducing the burden of legislation governing private pensions'.

Is it just me or is anyone else getting the feeling of *déjà vu*? Was this not what the Pensions and Finance Acts 2004 and tax simplification suppose to achieve?

## Soap Box

Treasury documents released under the Freedom of Information Act show that the Chancellor, Gordon Brown, received not less than 4 papers warning him about the damage his £5bn (now closer to £8bn) a year raid on British pension funds would inflict. Not only has it ruined a pensions' system once considered the best in the world it has struck at the heart of public confidence in long-term saving.

It is true that the stock market slump of 2000-2003 added to the pension fund problem and that lower interest rates brought about a fall in investment return, but one has to wonder if these two developments would have impacted on pension schemes so severely had there not been the withdrawal of tax relief on pension fund dividend income.

Some industry pundits claim that Gordon Brown must accept responsibility for the destruction of the pensions industry.

*(They may say so, I could not possibly comment)*

Debbie Marten  
Debbie@pnpf.co.uk

## Pensioners Deceased

### November 2006 - January 2007

A Barker	Humber
W Cattrell	Liverpool
M. Dodd	Liverpool
GE Harrison	Liverpool
AW Ion	London-West
JT Keys	Manchester
J Mannion	Heysbam
E Mutter	London-South
A Rollinson	Liverpool
RH Sidley	London-Thames
JA Simpson	Forth
EG Smith	Southampton
JC Temple	Liverpool
GE Thompson	Harwich
PY Tinmouth	Tyne
JA Williamson	London-Thames
JH Woodfine	Liverpool

## Retirements

Nov 2006 to Jan 2007

CJ Cambridge	Seaham	Dec
D Devey	Liverpool	Dec
J Gill	Forth	Dec
PH Lee	Bridgewater	Dec
SHM Lee	Forth	Sept
CRL Rankin	Forth	Dec

# NEW TECHNOLOGY (NT) RADAR

## A Quiet Revolution?



### A Brief History

Marine radar has been with us now for over 60 years, although it was only around 50 years ago that the Merchant ship owners reluctantly (also with somewhat surprising resistance from ships' Masters) introduced radar onto their ships. Even in the 60s some shipping companies refused to fit radar (Blue Star Line resisted the longest on the basis that radar led to lazy watchkeeping) and on my first trip to sea in 1969 the radar installation was an already antique Marconi Mk4 whose valve driven electronics occupied a whole mast-house on the main deck. Setting up this geriatric equipment to produce a picture required the "Sparky" to be in attendance in the mast-house to tweak up the tuning on an oscilloscope! He was not a happy man, not least because having spent around 15 minutes setting the system up the Captain would get the Mate on duty (he didn't understand it) to take a bearing and range from the land and then promptly switch it off to "save it" only to repeat the process around one hour later. The poor Sparky became hysterical in trying to explain that valves lasted much longer if they were left running and the fastest way to destroy them was to switch them on and off at short intervals. Needless to say the Captain was never convinced but somehow managed to survive the five month voyage without being murdered by the Sparky, although at times it was a close call! Fortunately the Captain only allowed the radar to be used in poor visibility making a landfall. In fog out at sea he preferred to have us apprentices posted on the bridge wings and forward keeping our ears tuned. We heard a lot of ships and got very cold but by proceeding at a safe speed of Dead Slow ahead or stop we managed to avoid all other shipping. There are probably many investigators who would recommend a return to those old techniques! As for the quality of the radar picture I never really got to find out because as a first trip apprentice the only time I was allowed on the bridge was during harbour stations and to clean the considerable amount of brassware! The radar set was hidden behind a thick black curtain and when in use the subdued murmurings from within

were reminiscent of a church confessional. Although the compulsory carriage of radar in Merchant ships was not a requirement until the implementation of the 1974 SOLAS Convention in 1980, the fitting of radar became standard practice as ship owners recognised the benefits it provided in navigational safety and passage speed. Consequently during the 1970's advances in the technology and quality of displays was rapid. The old reflection plotter was replaced by various electronic plotting aids (remember those matchsticks?) and the basic Ship's Head Up mode was supplemented by the gyro stabilised North Up displays and true motion facilities. The introduction of transistorised circuits enabled the electronics to be fitted into the radar casing and although the reliability was not that great the Sparkies were generally able to return to their hermit lifestyle in the radio room. This rapid advance of course gave free reign to the manufacturers who started introducing additional features to sell their sets. The actual needs of the end user gradually became sidelined and the many voices urging standardised control panels and display layouts were ignored. The early 1980's saw the introduction of daylight displays and this, coupled with further advances in electronic circuitry permitted it to be released from the confines of its black curtained shrine and be incorporated into a bridge console. Since then the merchant radar has generally evolved to the agenda of the manufacturers to the point where almost every radar now encountered has a different mode of operation and a bewildering array of controls from the traditional but feature crowded keyboard to touch screens and the rollerball and button systems. In the bid to provide "sexy" new functions, the basic needs of the navigator have now been almost totally

lost with even some essential features such as heading marker suppression being relegated to unfathomable depths within a myriad of sub menus! As pilots of course we see them all and I am sure that I am not alone in observing that it is now common to find Masters who have no idea how to find some features and it is not even worth pilots considering trying to set up parallel index lines on most sets!

### The situation today

Despite all the advances in displays and additional features the actual means of providing the radar image is basically unchanged from the first military radars of World War 2. Currently all radars are still dependent on high voltages being applied to a magnetron to generate a very high power short pulse and the only difference now is that prior to being sent to the display the raw radar returns are usually digitised to clean them up whilst automatic gain and tuning processors then work on the digitised signal to provide further cleaning to produce a "clean sweep" display. Whilst these facilities generally compare well with the old manual "tweaking" of these controls they can result in small targets remaining undetected in choppy conditions and although it is recommended that watchkeepers regularly switch to manual adjustments to check for small targets it is apparent that many watchkeepers don't. It is possible however that these auto features may be reviewed in the light of the MAIB investigation into the sinking of the yacht Ouzo (apparently following a collision or very close quarters incident with the P&O ferry Pride of Bilbao), which, upon examining the radar data at the time of the incident, found that the radars had never detected the Ouzo indicating that the target had been lost in the (force 5) sea clutter.

### So what's New?

The easy answer is complex electronic wizardry but your dedicated editor has spent a bit of time trying to understand the basics in order to make the following explanations as non technical as possible.

The main problem with a magnetron system is that the pulse generated is unstable and this results in a severe limitation of performance and also means



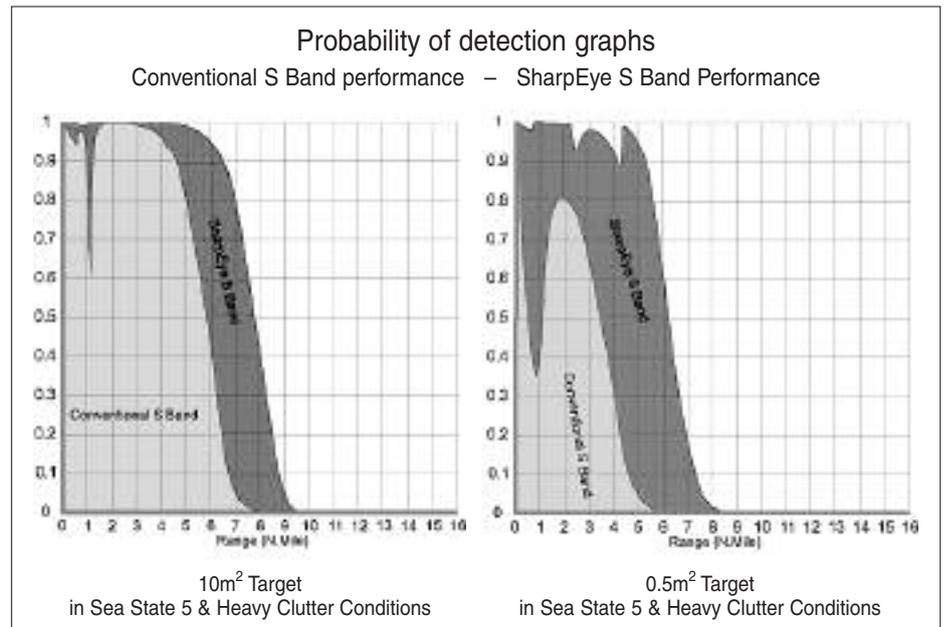
*The SharpEye box*

that only the amplitude of the returned pulse can be utilised to detect a target. Magnetrons are also expensive and, with only around 10,000 hours operating life, require regular replacement.

By using a long, low powered (voltages can be reduced to around 25 -50 volts) and stable pulse, target detection can be improved, especially in sea clutter. Although low power radar has been in use for some time with the military these are generally continuous wave rather than pulse systems which require very complex and therefore expensive receivers to analyse the returned waves for target detection. The major problem with using a low power long pulse has been that at the shorter ranges the return from the target starts arriving at the receiver before the transmitter has completed transmitting it and this resulted in early units being unable to comply with the IMO specifications. Whilst all manufacturers have been working to resolve this issue it is Kelvin Hughes who have managed to produce the first commercial NT radar which they have called "SharpEye".

### How does it work?

Basically traditional radars generate a pulse of around 1 microsecond in length but by using a pulse of 1 millisecond, the power needed to generate it is around 1000 times less. Therefore, instead of an intense high powered short pulse of around 25 KW, the SharpEye produces a low power long pulse of around 170W. The other key advantage of this low powered pulse is that it can be made extremely stable by modern processors which also permit the generation of very complex and variable waveforms. This "coherency" of pulses also enables the receiver to detect



phase shifts which further reduces the power requirement for the pulse to provide the required performance. The phase shift detection is the Doppler effect which means that as well as just detecting a target its movement towards or away from the observer can be analysed and it is this feature which permits the vast improvement in small target detection in sea clutter claimed by the manufacturers.

The ability to generate extremely complex but stable waveforms is also what resolves the problem of detecting targets at close range. Again in simplified terms, NT radar generates different waveforms for each pulse which effectively gives them a unique code and as each of these unique pulses is transmitted the receiver is alerted to recognise it when it returns. Other returns, which cannot be recognised, are therefore disregarded. The returned recognised pulse is then electronically

compressed into a very short pulse thus providing the IMO short range detection requirement.

### Conclusion

NT radar promises to deliver enhanced detection from more stable and therefore cheaper technology and the above tables have been produced by Kelvin Hughes comparing the performance with existing magnetron based radar. Another advantage for ship owners is that the SharpEye unit is compatible with existing KH scanners and displays.

For those of you who wish to learn more about the technology, full details can be found on the SharpEye website at:

<http://sharpeye.biz>

For some reason you need to register to enter the site but registration is free.

JCB

## Technical & Training

The Committee have not met since Conference, the next meeting will be on the 26th April 2007.

Since Conference there has been little to report. On the EMPA stage the development of POADS through the Marnis project is presently stalled. This is for two main reasons, both of which are interlinked. The first reason is one of funding. As of yet no funding has been received from the EU. This appears to be due to bureaucracy but inevitably results in delays with the procurement of equipment. The second reason is deciding on the choice of a Kalman filter. It is envisaged that the laptop will derive its position from satellites but it has also been agreed that a

second, preferably a terrestrial position fixing system should be incorporated. At present this will be an Inertial Navigation System (INS) and the two systems require an electronic (Kalman) filter to be able to work together.

A new initiative for pilot training and operations using azimuthing manoeuvring devices, known as AZIPILOT, is being put together by the School of Marine Science & Technology at Newcastle University. The Committee have been approached to become a partner in this project for which a bid is being made to the EU for funding.

At our October meeting we agreed a revised Element 7 (Working with Tugs) to the National Occupation Standards. The Committee was asked to look at this issue following a number of incidents involving the use of tugs. In this revision we agreed on the development of a standard vocabulary to be used when commu-

nicating with tugs. This is an issue which we will be discussing at our next meeting.

The subject of e-navigation is gathering pace with recent meetings being held by the MCA and also by IALA, both taking place in Southampton. There is still some confusion over exactly what is e navigation and what is expected of it and of course this also depends on which section of the maritime community you represent. Interestingly at the MCA meeting in February aimed at formulating the UK view on e navigation it was agreed that the end user requirements should be paramount. It was interesting that while manufacturers, Government Agencies, Port Authorities and various professional bodies were well represented there were only two or three practicing seafarers present.

Gareth Rees  
[dcg.rees@talktalk.com](mailto:dcg.rees@talktalk.com)

# 21st Century UKMPA - The Future?

It was with great interest I read John's latest editorial in the January edition of *The Pilot* concerning the last ten years of pilotage in the UK and the predications for the future. However, there appears to be one major omission from this prognosis, namely the future of the Association itself. Perhaps the mists did not clear enough, or he was fearful of what he may have seen! I have also noted the various other articles in the last two magazines, the minutes and the reports from Conference. They all appear to highlight a general trend. In short, an apparent total lack of interest by the majority of the membership in relation to most issues and UKMPA affairs and an inferred apparent inability of the current executive to cope with the workload.

It is interesting to note that the only proposal currently on the table to address

this issue appears to be a bit of tinkering round the edges by considering a full time 'administrator'. It is my belief that the problem is now far more acute and perhaps it is time to fully reappraise what this Association wants and what it stands for. Much comment has been made recently of the poor attendance at Conference, lack of interest and the failure to acquire representation on Section Committee. One SC member has been charged with investigating the problem. What is sadly missing is any form of analysis of why this should be this case? I do not believe pilots generally are unaware of the major issues facing us in the UK or are unconcerned about their implications. What I do believe is they feel out of touch with the executive and in many cases feel uncomfortable with the role and affiliated

organisations the Association has aligned itself to. As Conference is now deferred until next year perhaps a good place to start might be for members of SC to tour the Regions and Districts and talk to the members en-mass and then consider what has been said and what their aspirations are.

Perhaps in addition to the issue of a full time administrator perhaps we should also be analysing the following in association with this debate.

## Should we retain affiliation to any trade union, and if so which one?

I have heard many comments expressing concern over the proposed merger with Amicus. Whilst it may have major benefits for the Union executive, is it going to assist us as pilots? I am also aware that there are many pilots who have always felt (especially in self employed ports) that our affiliation to a union of any form sends out the wrong signal to the ports associations. (See Brian Wilson's T&TC report on page 2 of the last issue concerning PPE) Others, despite UKMPA membership have also retained membership of NUMAST and advocated a switch to this organisation that is more directly marine related. Finally, both EMPA and IMPA are non aligned organisations and because of their insistence in not becoming involved on a direct basis in any disputes, they appear to command far more respect. This manifests itself in an ability to communicate more freely and open with outside bodies that are less suspicious of their motives. Perhaps the UKMPA should do the same? Were it to be an organisation like IMPA it could represent pilots national aims and objectives but refrain from becoming directly involved in local issues either of a contractual or dispute nature. This would avoid Association funds being spent on dispute etc. and allow them to be concentrated on representation to protect pilots generic interests in this country. Those (either employed or self employed) who wish to have the protection of union membership could apply to one of their own choosing where their entitlements and benefits are clearly defined. It is interesting to note that nowhere in the UKMPA Rules are these benefits and entitlements clarified.

## Do we need to retain an office in central London?

Whilst I accept the current facility is provided cost free by the T&G, is it effective? If the UKMPA was a non aligned organisation the T&G subscriptions (or any union element) could be redirected to employment of the desired administrator


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Lairdside Maritime Centre

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at a small HQ in a more central and less expensive location.

### **Does any union really understand the complex issues regarding pilotage?**

We have had 4 major occasions regarding pilotage issues where we have sought assistance from the T&G.

Graeme Hutchinson on the Clyde  
The Humber dispute  
Kristian Pedersen  
Belfast

Only the latter has resulted in success and this apparently mainly due to the determination of the individuals involved, the assistance of other pilots and Barrie Youde. I am not aware who has met the cost of this assistance.

### **Why do people not wish to take up the posts on the various national committees?**

Instead of constantly bemoaning this issue and berating the membership perhaps someone should be asking why this appears to be the case and what measures can be introduced to redress it.

Whilst I have my own opinions on many of these issues it is not the time or place to express them, but I do believe they should be debated. What is not mentioned in the reports from conference is that in addition to the SC members who stood down, so did some of the deputies, myself amongst them. Perhaps my reasons were shared by some of the others.

What cannot be denied is that over the last few years we have lost individuals who never questioned the sacrifice of their own free time and in this were supported by their colleagues. Past Chairmen Mike Leney, Norman McKinney and Les Cate, Numast President Peter Russell, EMPA president and PNPf Chairman Geoff Topp, John Burn - secretary, IMPA President Geoff Taylor and many SC and T&TC members who sacrificed huge amounts of their own free time in the protection of our profession and other pilots' interests both nationally and internationally. Finally, it would be totally disingenuous not to mention John, who in addition to his duties at Conference, regularly produces such an excellent magazine that is read and scrutinised around the world for its excellent articles. WHERE ARE THE PEOPLE WITH THE SAME COMMITMENT TO REPLACE THEM AND THE MEMBERS TO ASSIST THEM IN DOING SO?

It has also recently been reported that we are to host the 2012 IMPA conference. Having known Geoff for many years I believe I understand his motives for this suggestion. Those in the know understand that most progress is made not at official

meetings but over dinner and social events where barriers can be relaxed; if one needs convincing of this note the article concerning World Maritime Day (*The Pilot October 2006*) and the guest list. If this event is to be a success it will require a huge commitment from the membership and possibly financial input. Like the Olympics themselves, it has the capacity to be a great success or a total disaster. Our inability at organising our own Conference in recent years should be born in mind. How interesting if we had to rely on a small band of retired pilots to ensure this event is a success.

### **So where are we now?**

Coincidentally, ten years ago as John was assuming editorship of *The Pilot* magazine we also embarked on the review of the 1987 Pilot Act following the *Sea Empress* disaster. No one knew at that time what the final outcome would be but all pilots concerned tried in good faith to achieve a satisfactory outcome and look to the future. If you think the PMSC and GBP are poor, imagine the outcome without UKMPA pressure. There have also been various references recently from districts expressing concern over the suitability or quality of applicants for pilots' positions. How interesting to note therefore that during this same period some pilots had a vision. They perceived a situation where at some time in the future the ready supply of suitable UK applicants would dry up and we would have to resort to utilising foreign nationals. To address this they proposed a UK pilotage qualification enabling young applicants to enter at an early age without lengthy sea service backed up by a comprehensive set of occupational standards. The debates were many over what level the qualification should equate to and the level of sea time. Furthermore, there were continuous claims at Conference that it was not necessary as there was a 'significant pool of suitable persons at sea with the necessary qualification (class 1)'. How empty these assurances now seem! This all ran on to the rocks with the dispute on the Humber. For over two years we remained in the wilderness as the DfT were horrified pilots had taken industrial action; in their view jeopardising the safety of navigation. BPIT was superseded by PSSL with no pilotage involvement. During this time the ports stole our clothes and ran with the idea of a qualification on their own terms. It may now be too late to undue that damage.

A few weeks ago whilst on passage from Avonmouth to Cardiff I was in conversation with yet another SE Wales trainee pilot. (Ex Humber - current) He advised that there were now 11 nationalities serving on the Humber but only 48% had joined the T&G because the

foreign nationals were not interested. It is interesting to note that he also advised five had transferred to London. It is the first stopping post. Like a cancer it will spread - pilot job on the Humber, transfer to another UK district, until like the Merchant Navy there will be few UK pilots left. There is one glimmer of hope. One of the greatest benefits of self employed pilot districts is their ability to select their working colleagues. Perhaps a few more will now have the courage to follow Belfast's example and take control again of their own future. This aside perhaps the next big issue is - will we blacklist pilots from joining the UKMPA in existing districts who have previously been employed on the Humber and accepted into post?

So Gentlemen, like John I too have gazed into the crystal ball. I see a situation where employed ports will provoke more confrontation and endeavour to introduce additional foreign personnel on personal contracts. A foundation degree and pilotage qualification will be introduced on others' terms, possibly without even any element of sea time. We will gradually lose our influence nationally as Port Associations argue we are no longer representative of all pilots in the UK and are a union motivated and backed Association. Through lack of interest and failure to participate we will lose the respect of our international colleagues. There will be no changes to the 1987 Pilotage Act to our benefit. The PMSC may become mandatory, but only if we keep pushing the arguments. There will be another major disaster possibly AIS or e-navigation assisted. Working hours will continue to cause division in the Association. This appears to be an employed/self employed divide. Some employed pilots are unhappy with their hours and roster systems, the majority of self employed districts do not experience a problem. As other pension options arise, members may abandon the PNPf unless it can offer long term security and the port associations will endeavour to distance themselves from supporting it. Finally, I also see John as editor of *The Pilot* magazine in ten years time, as there is unlikely to be anyone with his ability or prepared to make the same commitment.

I really do hope to be proved wrong. As so few persons attended conference and take up of the web site message board is minimal, perhaps a few more of the rank and file members may wish to become involved in this debate. I personally believe it is time for radical change if we are to be fit for the new challenges ahead and operate effectively as a national body.

Avald Wymark  
Bristol (28.3.07)

## OBITUARIES

### Alec Rollinson 1934 – 2006



Alec was the only child of a Master Shipwright and Boatbuilder, who had at one time been a Millom Pilot. He was taken afloat, at six weeks old, in the family yacht and began a lifetime's passion for things nautical, and the Irish Sea in particular.

Because of his father's work abroad for the Crown Agencies, he has an unusual upbringing, living in Barrow with his grandparents and spending a great deal of time on all sorts of boats.

When at 16, he joined the Liverpool Pilot Service, he came with a level of seamanship that took most of us years to acquire.

This solid young man had the look of an "Old Sea Dog" years before his time; his colleagues affectionately christened him the "Duke of Barrow".

In the final months of his apprenticeship he married Jean and they had two children. Sadly, whilst the children were still young, Jean died and Alec struggled to keep the family going and to do his share of piloting. They were hard years and he never complained.

All his working life he was a "bag carrying" pilot and loved every minute of his piloting life, but his passion was for yachts and racing them and to this end he became one of the best known yachtsmen in the North West.

He had extraordinary talents inherited from his father and owned three of the most perfectly presented yachts imaginable. His *Dee 27 Pellegrina*, which he owned for 25 years, used to appear in an advertisement for yacht varnish and the list of trophies that he won over the years was immense. He was one of the original RYA examiners in 1974 and any ticket that he granted was truly earned.

A former commodore of Tranmere Sailing Club and a member of several other clubs, Alec had, by now, remarried and Nikki, his mate, became a yachtswoman in her own right.

Alec retired in 1997 and enjoyed, to the full, the cycle of summer cruising to the Western Isles or France, and the winter maintenance of his beloved *Pellegrina*.

His health began to let him down a couple of years ago and the devotion of his family kept him sailing as long as possible.

He was most certainly a "one off", honest, strong and of great integrity – a true friend – sadly missed.

David Hopkinson,  
Liverpool pilot (retired)

### John A. Simpson 1914-2006



My father, Captain J.A. Simpson, died on 29th December 2006, in his home at Lower Largo, Fife where he had been born almost 93 years earlier. The son of a shipmaster who had just "gone into steam" after 23 years in sail; the grandson of a seaman killed in a fall from aloft and the great-grandson of a schooner master, it was almost inevitable that he should follow a career at sea. However, his seafaring started at the tender age of 3 months when he and his mother accompanied his father on a voyage to the Mediterranean in the ss *Satrap*.

At the end of the First World War, his father took command of Sir William Garthwaite's three masted barque *Garthsnaid*. Once again, young John and his mother accompanied him, but, this time, on a much longer voyage which was to last 2 years and 4 months. Three roundings of Cape Horn during this voyage and his subsequent Master's Certificate duly qualified him for full membership of the International Association of Cape Horners, something of which he was particularly proud.

His own seafaring career commenced in January 1930 when he signed indentures with the Commonwealth and Dominion Line Ltd. He obtained his Second Mate's Certificate in April 1934, but, in the midst of the Depression, the Commonwealth and Dominion Line had no berths for junior officers. However, the Company were manning the mv *Port Gisborne* with a deck crew made up of ex-apprentices who had passed for Second Mate. John was offered an AB's job in her which he readily accepted. He was to remain in that ship for 18 months, being promoted lamp trimmer on his final voyage. He obtained an officer's position as 4th Officer of the ss *Port Caroline* in July 1936, but, as he was to say himself, "For the first time since going to sea, I was unhappy in that ship." He left her and the Port Line in June 1937.

Jobs were still hard to come by, but he obtained a 3rd Mate's berth with R Chapman & Son, joining the ss *Innerton* in Rotterdam in August 1937. He was to remain with that Company for 7½ years. On passing for First Mate in November 1938, he was promoted to 2nd Mate of the ss *Demeterton*. In April 1940 he was promoted to Mate of that ship, and, as he often recounted, "was married in Glasgow during his lunch break!" Passing for Master in April 1941, he was appointed Mate of the ss *Hermiston* for a long voyage of almost 2 years. Finally, in June 1943, at the age of 29, he was appointed Master of the ss *Generton*.

During the war years he had a number of narrow escapes, being in one of the last ships to leave Narvik prior to that port falling to the Germans. The *Hermiston* was the second last ship out of Rangoon before that city was seized by the Japanese. However, the nearest that he came to being killed was whilst the *Demeterton* was in drydock in Birkenhead in December 1940. He was in his cabin with his wife and the Captain and his wife, when a 100lb bomb penetrated two decks above, passing through the bunk and drawers and the deck below, before continuing on through the 'tween deck and exploding in the lower hold. The only injury was to the Captain's wife, whose back was badly scorched.

In early 1945, with his name in for both the Forth and Thames pilotage, John thought that it would be wise to join a coasting company. He was appointed Mate of William Robertson's mv *Jacinth* and subsequently served as Master of the ss *Empire Concllyde*, ss *Fluor* and mv *Jade*.

He was appointed as a Forth Pilot in January 1949, being licenced for the pilotage district and the ports of Grangemouth and Alloa. In 1957, in order to return to his beloved Lower Largo, he transferred to Methil, at that time still Scotland's largest coal-exporting port. He was to remain at Methil, later amalgamated with Burntisland, until retiring in February, 1979.

The pilots from the Fife ports also served on the "Inward Firth" conducting ships upriver to Leith and Grangemouth from the cutters stationed at the Bass Rock and Inchkeith, and, from 1969, using the shore station at Granton. He served as a Pilot Member on the Board of the Authority, and was an enthusiastic member of the Scottish Guild of Pilots. At all times he was a great inspiration to younger pilots.

All his leisure activities were associated with the sea. Until reaching the age of 84, he fished for crabs and lobsters from a dinghy which he always hauled up and down the beach. He loved to fish and to sail, and was a founder member of the Largo Bay Sailing Club. An avid reader, he had an extensive collection of nautical books, many concerned with sailing ships.

After a long and very happy marriage of almost 40 years, John's wife, Peggy, died in 1979 only 6 months after he retired, which was a bitter blow. However, his retirement, surrounded by his family and with the subsequent friendship of Sheila, was also to prove an enjoyable period of his life.

He will be sadly missed by my sister Margaret and me and our respective spouses, John and Barbara. The four grandchildren, four great grandchildren and the wider family have lost a beloved Papa.

James W Simpson

## Len Sidgwick (31.05.1927 - 20.02.2007)



Len Sidgwick was born in Middlesbrough in 1927. From an early age he had an interest in the sea, probably inherited from a Master Mariner Grandfather. He also had a love for football and as a boy played alongside Don Revie for Middlesbrough Swifts but, fortunately for the Tees Pilotage Service, he embarked on a maritime career.

In 1943 he commenced a long association with the Missions to Seamen when he worked with Chaplain Bob Precious whilst waiting to commence his apprenticeship with the Tees Pilots. On completion of that apprenticeship he served aboard Unilever's *Fort Remy* then United Africa's *Leonian* and *Lagosian*. He gained his 2nd. Mate's certificate in 1949 and then put in time aboard the *Farndale* and on Crosthwaite Tees tugs until called upon to commence pilot training. In April 1950, at the age of 22, he set a Tees record that will always be his of being the youngest person to hold a Pilot's licence. He became a 1st Class Pilot in 1956 at the age of 28.

From the very start of his career Len took a full and active interest in all aspects of the Tees Pilotage Service. Many readers will remember him as a regular delegate and speaker at Conference. In 1960 he became a member of the Tees Pilots' Committee and soon after was elected Chairman. He was invited onto the board of the Tees Pilotage Authority in 1963 and became a director of the Tees Pilots' Cutter Company that same year. Len carried out all these duties with the utmost integrity. Whilst always looking after the interests of the Pilots he never lost sight of the long-term interests of the port and other port services. Although a choice pilot himself he recognised the divisiveness of the system and was a prime mover in it being abandoned on the Tees. A firm believer of openness and honesty he was proud to be a founder member of the Tees Liaison Panel

where free, and generally friendly, discussion further enhanced the good relationship enjoyed by all the river services. Len was Chairman of the Tees Pilots' Committee throughout the difficult period of pilotage reorganisation following the 1987 Act, when his diplomacy and guidance were major factors in the conclusion of an agreement satisfactory to both Pilots and Port. He was at the helm when the ground was laid for the smooth amalgamation of the pilotage for the ports of Tees and Hartlepool, again without impairing the respect and harmony between Pilots and the Port Authority. Fifteen years after his retirement T&H Pilots, present and future, will continue to benefit from Len's many years of astute Chairmanship.

Len was rarely without a smile, a joke and a positive outlook. He supported most Service activities and events – was always available to make up the cricket team, played international football into his mid-fifties in the European Pilots' Football Tournament and, when the need arose, enlivened many a social event when a piano happened to be close to hand! Outside of pilotage he found time for Round Table where he became Chairman, 41 Club where he also became Chairman, a founder member of Cleveland Rotary Club where he was twice President and Probus where he was Chairman yet again. Len was a raconteur of some note and he gave freely of his time to take on after-dinner speaking engagements covering pilotage and other maritime topics. Any remuneration offered for this was donated to the Missions to Seamen or the Arthritis Research Campaign.

Somehow Len also found time to pilot ships. He was a natural, confident ship handler and always seemed to strike up a rapport with his Captains. He was acknowledged by fellow pilots on training trips as being especially supportive and informative. Early in his career he piloted the largest ship to berth in Stockton, later he berthed the first 100,000 tonner to enter the Tees and, before he retired, he was pilot aboard the 230,000 ton *Phillips Enterprise* which is the largest vessel to enter the Tees. He retired in 1992 at the age of 65 having completed 42 years as a licenced pilot.

All who were fortunate enough to be acquainted with Len, be it through work or play, will mourn his passing. He would have been unable to achieve all he did in so many different fields without the support, encouragement and, no doubt, occasional restraint of a very understanding wife. Len and Kath, married in 1948, sadly just failing to celebrate their diamond-wedding anniversary. He was head of a very close and loving family and he will be sorely missed by Kath, children Alison and Martin and his five grandchildren.

Gary Salter (Tees)

## Geoffrey Edgar Harrison 1926 - 2007



There are many retired pilots throughout the UK who, although not widely known outside their own District, were dedicated to their work as a pilot and their passing should definitely be recorded in the annals of the UKMPA. Retired Liverpool Pilot Geoffrey Edgar Harrison, who died on 3rd January 2007, after several months of illness bravely borne, was one of those pilots.

He was born in Birkenhead in 1926 and in 1943, during the Second World War, at the age of seventeen; he joined the Cunard Line serving both on the *Aquitania* and the *Queen Mary*. He sailed out of New York a total of fifty-six times, a port, which rather appropriately, had long associations with Liverpool shipping particularly through the Cunard Line.

In 1945 he joined the Liverpool Pilotage Service and after six hard working years on the pilot boats as a pilot apprentice, or 'boathand' as we were officially known, was licensed as a Third Class pilot in September 1951. Four years later he became a First Class pilot, and, in due course, he was appointed as an Appropriated pilot to Furness Withy Line whose ships he served for quite a number of years. Forty-five years after first going to sea he retired, along with many other Liverpool pilots, in 1988 as part of the re-organisation of UK pilotage services.

In retirement he enjoyed, amongst other things, his love of gardening spending many happy hours in their large garden. Together with his wife Sheila, who survives him, he also very much enjoyed participating in the retired pilots social functions and could be relied upon to 'swing the lamp' with tales of ships and pilotage along with the rest of us.

He married Sheila in 1951 and they had three sons, Stephen, Martin and Timothy. He was extremely and justifiably proud of his sons and was delighted to have seven grandchildren and three great grandchildren all of who gave him great pleasure and whom he loved dearly.

In addition to the family many of his retired colleagues and friends from his

other interests outside the pilotage service filled the memorial Chapel to overflowing at his funeral. A funeral which was conducted in the inimical friendly, gentle, and delightful manner by our Honorary member of the Liverpool Pilots' Association, the Reverend Canon 'Bob' Evans, on the 12th January 2007. It was a fitting celebration of his life and a moving farewell to our friend and colleague.

Geoffrey was a most conscientious and skilful pilot who was extremely well respected by his colleagues who will remember him with great fondness. What better epitaph can a pilot have than to say, "He was a wonderful family man, a good friend, a skilful pilot and a reliable shipmate".

*Geoff Topp  
Liverpool pilot (Retired)*

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## John Christopher Temple 1940 - 2007



Merseyside and the Liverpool Pilots have lost a true seafarer in retired Liverpool Pilot, John Christopher Temple, who died on 22nd January 2007, after six months of a dreadful illness, which he bore with great dignity.

Born in Liverpool in 1940, just a few months after the beginning of the Second World War, his first association with matters nautical came about when he

joined the West Derby Sea Cadets in the early 1950s. During his time in the Sea Cadets he rowed whalers on the River Mersey, which gave him a close view of the vast array of shipping then to be seen on the Mersey. His connection with the Sea Cadets was something he valued and continued to have throughout his life, giving freely of his time and effort.

Then, he went to sea as a Cadet, with the Federal Steam Navigation Company in 1956, before joining the Liverpool Pilotage Service in 1957. After the usual long apprenticeship on the pilot boats he proudly qualified as a Third Class pilot in April of 1964.

Four years later, in 1968, he became a First Class pilot, and, in due course, in 1988, he became one of the pilots appropriated to the Atlantic Container Line (ACL). He piloted the ACL ships, which were the largest regular container ships visiting the port of Liverpool, with great skill and distinction in all weathers, and not infrequently in very difficult conditions, for fifteen years. He also had the honourable distinction of being the pilot of the Cunard liner *Queen Elizabeth II* on her first visit to the River Mersey watched from both banks of the Mersey by very many thousands of spectators. But he was just as happy piloting the every day ship visiting the Port too, because he loved ship handling and derived great satisfaction from his job. He retired from the job which he loved to do, and did so professionally, in 2003 at the age of sixty-three almost forty years after becoming first Licensed.

It is sad to note in passing, that his younger brother by four years, David, also a Liverpool Pilot, died some years ago at far too young an age.

During many of his later working years John was a staunch supporter, indeed a leading light, in the work of the Merseyside Maritime Museum in organising the acquisition of real ship exhibits for the museum. To this end, with the help of others, including myself, in 1984 he brought the Liverpool diesel-electric powered No. 2, Pilot Boat, the *Edmund Gardner* into the Albert Dock after



*ICI barge Wincham*



Left: No 2 Pilot Boat, Edmund Gardner Right: The tug Brocklebank

overseeing its refurbishment in Princes Dock over a long period of very hard work. Then, sometime later, John oversaw the move to her permanent berth in the Canning dry-dock. The *Edmund Gardner* stands there proudly today as a fitting monument not only to the Liverpool Pilotage Service but also to John.

However, his enthusiasm and drive to retain a vibrant maritime history on Merseyside did not begin or end there. The Museum Director at the time put John in charge of the Museum's Alexandra Towing Company tug *Brocklebank*. And, John was the driving force behind the acquisition of the Museum's first vessel afloat, the ICI barge *Wincham*, through the 'Wincham Preservation Society Trust'. John ensured,

with an enthusiastic team of hard-working volunteers, which he led, that both of these vessels have been kept in seagoing condition to this day. It is no exaggeration to say that this would never have been achieved without his unstinting hard work and the giving freely of many, many hours of his spare time both whilst still working and during his retirement until illness prevented him continuing. It is with gratitude that he will be particularly warmly remembered for this on Merseyside, but his efforts will also be well remembered and appreciated in several other UK and near continental ports for his bringing of the tug *Brocklebank* to their celebratory maritime events over the years. He really did have salt water in his veins.

In the latter part of his life, his soul mate, Pamela Brown, shared his time with him amongst which were many enjoyable maritime and other events and then with both of them showing great courage she saw him through those last very difficult months.

At his funeral on a cold February day, in addition to his children, Sarah and James, who he loved dearly, and his dear and close companion Pamela, there were present very many of his retired colleagues and friends, particularly those friends and colleagues from his other maritime activities, who filled the memorial Chapel to overflowing. We will certainly remember him.

*Geoff Topp, Liverpool pilot (Retired)*

## PILOTS MEET UP IN TAMPA

Whilst on holiday in Florida, Captain David Ingham, retired Trinity House and Havens pilot and currently Captain of the Felixstowe Master Mariners' Club, attended the February luncheon of the Tampa Chapter of the American Master Mariners' Association. This was held in the Columbia Restaurant in the historic Ybor district of Tampa. The meeting heard a talk given by the head of the St Petersburg division of the United States Coastguard. The talk detailed the responsibilities of the Coastguard in the 21st century regarding the fields of maritime safety, and Homeland Security post 9/11 along with drug and illegal immigrant smuggling and the certification of the various classes of small craft, which are numerous in this area. The meeting was informed about the new Transport Workers' Identity Card (TWIC) card which will be mandatory for all persons employed in port areas within the USA.

Captain Ingham had the chance to chat with Master Mariners who had brought their ships to Felixstowe in the past. Similar concerns exist amongst mariners both in America and the UK concerning the enthusiasm by the authorities to use legislation to criminalise seafarers, particularly masters and pilots, after maritime mishaps.



Left to right: Captain Robert Holden retired Panama Canal pilot, Captain David Ingham retired Trinity House and Haven Ports pilot and Captain Donald Mercereau retired Sandy Hook New York pilot

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**SOLASTC 180**



- Twin chamber 180 Newtons
- Twin Auto Inflation
- 3/4 Length Coat
- Waterproof and Breathable

**From Coat to Lifejacket in 0 - 5 Seconds**

- Single chamber 150 Newtons
- Auto Inflation
- Bodywarmer Style
- Optional Pockets

**PACIFIC SEA TREKKER**



**SEA EXPLORER**



- Single chamber 150 Newtons
- Auto Inflation
- Blouson Style
- Waterproof and Breathable

• THE SEASAFE RANGE OF FULLY INTEGRATED LIFEJACKETS •



Shop & Factory: Mariner's House, Mariner's Way, Somerton Business Park, Newport Road, Cowes, Isle of Wight PO31 8PB  
Tel: +44 (0)1983 282388 • Fax: +44 (0)1983 282399 • Email: admin@seasafe.co.uk • Website: www.seasafe.co.uk



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